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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/435,354	11/08/1999	NEIL HARRIS	085874/0193	5141

7590 03/28/2003  
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EXAMINER

NI, SUHAN

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2643

DATE MAILED: 03/28/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/435,354

Applicant(s)

HARRIS ET AL.

Examiner

Suhan Ni

Art Unit

2643

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 November 1999.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5, 7, 8 and 10-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 6 and 9 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.  
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).  
\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).  
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 6.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **DETAILED ACTION**

1. The Art Unit location of your application in the PTO has changed. To aid in correlating any papers for this application, all further correspondence regarding this application should be directed to Group **Art Unit 2643**.
2. This communication is responsive to the CIP application filed on 11/08/1999.

### ***Double Patenting***

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

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3. Claims 1-28 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-7 of U.S. Patent No. 6,351,542. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because claims 1-7 of U.S. Patent No. 6,351,542 are similar in scope to claim 1-28 of this application with obvious wording variations. For example:

Claim 1 mainly claims a similar loudspeaker device as claimed in U.S. Patent No. 6,351,542, which the loudspeaker comprises a vibrating panel having a bending wave actuator for generating sound; and a wave guide for transmitting the sound.

#### *Claim Objections*

4. Claim 1 is objected to because of the following informalities:

In lines 1-2, the limitation of "a phase uncorrelated diffuse sound source" is vague since it is not clearly supported and detailed described in specification.

Appropriate correction is required.

#### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112*

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter, which the applicant regards as his invention.

5. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 3, it recites the limitation of "the axes of the panel" in line 4. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

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***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) The invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.  
(e) The invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

6. Claims 1-5, 10-11, 15-19 and 27-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Takahashi (US-5,751,827).

Regarding claim 1, Takahashi discloses a loudspeaker (11) comprising a diffused sound source; and a duct (14) coupled to the sound source to direct acoustic energy from the sound source, wherein the duct includes a substantially parallel section (22, 24) as claimed.

Regarding claims 2-3, Takahashi further discloses the loudspeaker, wherein the sound source includes a panel radiator (50) and an actuator (32) applying bending wave to the panel radiator.

Regarding claims 4-5, 10-11, 17-19, Takahashi further discloses the loudspeaker, wherein the duct is configured as claimed (Figs. 1-3).

Regarding claims 15 and 27, Takahashi further discloses the loudspeaker, wherein an enclosure means encloses one face of the panel (Fig. 2).

Regarding claims 16 and 28, Takahashi further discloses the loudspeaker, wherein a plane of the panel is parallel to an axis (15) of the duct.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 7-8, 12-14 and 20-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takahashi (US-5,751,827) in view of Oh (US-5,524,062).

Regarding claims 7-8, 12-14 and 20-26, Takahashi does not clearly teach an acoustic reflector as claimed. Oh discloses a loudspeaker comprising a duct having acoustic reflectors (Fig. 4). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to provide acoustic reflectors taught by Oh for the duct of the loudspeaker as an alternate choice, in order to desirably direct the sound.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

8. Claims 6 and 9 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

***Conclusion***

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.
10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to **Suhan Ni** whose telephone number is (703)-308-9322, and the

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number for fax machine is (703)-305-9508. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday from 9:00 am to 7:30 pm. If it is necessary, the examiner's supervisor, **Curtis Kuntz**, can be reached at (703) 305-4708.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-3900.

SN

03/22/2003

  
CURTIS KUNTZ  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2600